A SERMON OF REpentance.

A very godlie and profitable Sermon preached at Lee in Essex by Ar*thur Dent, Minister of Gods word:* and published at the request of *sundrie godlie and well dis*posed persons:

1581

The vij. of March.

Ionach. 2. 8.

They that wait vpon lying vanities forsake their owne mercie.

BODLEIANA

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In Concionem Arthuri Dent
G. Pewdæi Carmen.

Maturè reſipiſce, precor, peccataq; linque,
Qui legis aut audis, quiſquis es, iſtud opus
Sin noua peccatis peccata prioribus addes,
Olim hæc te contra Concio teſtis erit,
Hac aliquot lecta flentes ſua crimina, multum
Mutarunt mores, & noua vita placet.

The ſame in Engliſh.

THou that doeſt read or heare this (work,
I wiſh thee to doe this:
Repent in time, and ſinne forſake,
Amend that is amiſſe.
But if thou wilt adde ſinne to ſinne,
not minding to amend,
This Sermon ſhall a witneſſe be,
againſt thee in the end.
Some that haue hard this read of late,
lamenting much their ſinne:
Haue changde their former manners,
and a new life now begin.

TO THE READER.

ALthough I was moſt vnwilling that this poore talent & trauaile of mine ſhould euer haue ben broched abroade, and come to light both bicauſe it may ſeem as a Candle lighted at noone day: as alſo becauſe manye other mens dooings might more worthily a great deale haue been publiſhed, and committed vnto letters: yet bicauſe diuers which heard it preached with a liuely voice, were very inſtant, yea and more than importunate with me to haue it publiſhed, vſing ſuch reaſons as I could not greatly gainesay, I did at the laſt yeeld to their requeſt, and ſo this vntimely fruite is come abroade, to be ſolde in open markets. Let no man be offended that I haue not ſtrained my ſelfe to flie an high pitch, to ſome out the froth of mans wiſedome, and to make a great ſhew of learning, by blowing

ing the bladder of vanitie til it burſt with ſwelling. For that is not my vſe, I ſeeke eſpecially the ſaluation of the ſimple and ignorant, and therefore ſtowpe downe to their reach and capacitie. Therefore I beſeech thee gentle Reader, accept my good meaning: Reade this without preiudice, like it as thou profiteſt, ſo ſhalt thou haue praiſe of God, and comfort in thy conſcience.

A. D.

A SERMON OF REpentance.

The Text, Luke 13. 5.

I tell you nay: but except you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

THe occasion of these wordes of our Lord and Sauiour Iesus Christ, was, because there were certaine that shewed him of the *Galileans*, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their owne sacrifices: That is, murdered them as they were sacrificing: & so their blood was mingled with the blood of the beasts which were sacrificed. Those men therefore thought that those *Galileans* were greater sinners than all other *Galileans*, because they had suffered such things: & that those eightéene also, vpon whome the Tower in *Siloam* fell and slue them, were sinners aboue all men that dwelt in *Hierusalem*. Wherein they did vtter a secret corruption, naturally ingendered in all men,

that is, very sharply to see into the sinnes of others, and seuerely to censure them: but in the meane while to flatter themselues, and to be blindfold in seeing their owne sinnes. For these men thought because the like iudgements did not fall vpon them, therefore they were safe enough, they were not so great sinners, but rather highly in the fauour of God: According as many do falsly suppose; that those are alwayes the worst sort of people, whom God doth most strike, and presse with his punishing hand, hauing forgotten that God doth not keepe an ordinarie rate here below, to punish euery man as he is worst, or to fauour and cocker him as he is best, but onely taketh some examples as he thinketh good, for the instruction and aduertisement of al others, and to be as it were looking glasses, wherein euery man may see his owne face, yea and his owne cause handled, and that God is a seuere reuenger of sinne, that all men may learn by the example of some to tremble and beware, least peraduenture they be worthily constrained to keepe their owne turnes, and to know what they haue deserued. These men which brought these newes to our Sauiour Christ had taken

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forth this lesson: whereupon our Sauiour is iustly occasioned to correct their erroni-ous and sinister iudgement, and to teach them that they must not reioyce at the iust punishments of others, but rather to be in-structed thereby to repentance.

And further to signifie, that God doth not alwayes most punish the most notori-ous offenders, as Murtherers, Theeues, Robbers, Whoremasters, Blasphemers, Quarellers, Scoffers, and such like, but reserueth them vnto the iudgement of the great day, and as it were fatteth them a-gainst the day of slaughter, and therefore he answereth them negatiuely, and saith Nay, or not so, but except ye repent, you shal all likewise perish, as if he should say, are you all of this opinion in deed, that only monstrous sinners are punished in this world, and others let alone? or that the Ga-lileans and those eightéene vpon whom the Tower in Siloam fell, were greater sin-ners, then all others? Or do you thinke be-cause the same iudgements haue not light vpon you, therefore you shall steale away in the darke, and escape the iudgement of God? No, no, you are deceiued. For I say vnto you, that except you mourne and la-

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ment for your sins, and fall to some agree-ment with God in time, (you I say, euen you which are so ready to condemn others, and iustifie your selues) shall not onely perish with the like iudgements in this present world, but be euerlastingly condemned in the world to come. So that our Sauiour in so saying, doth thunder downe a most dreadful sentence vpon all our heads: for he concludeth & setteth it downe, that all men liuing vpon the face of the earth, whether they be high or low, rich or poore, yong or old, noble or vnnoble, learned, or vnlearned, simple or politike, of what estate, degree, and condition so euer they be, liuing and dying without repentance, shall perish and be damned in hell fire for euer. The Scriptures are full of such thunderbolts. Iohn 3. 18. He that beleeueth not is damned alreadie. And 2. Cor. 13. verse 5. Proone your selues whether you are in the faith, examine your selues, know ye not your selues that Iesus Christ is in you except ye be reprobates? Where the Apostle flatly setteth downe that all those which haue not Christ dwelling in their hartes by faith, which is the houshold stuffe of repentance, are no better then reprobates,

probates, castawaies, and condemned persons. But because the most people in these dayes are grosslie deceyued in repentance, both concerning what it is, what it meaneth, what it worketh, what be the qualities and conditions of it, which be the causes, and which be the lets and hinderances, and also why, when, and wherefore we should repent. Therfore I haue in present intent to teach first what is repentãce. Secondly, which be his qualities and effects. Thirdly, when we should repent. Fourthly, wherfore we should repent. And last of all, what letteth vs from repentance: which order and methode of teaching, although some may mislike (as in déede with me it is not ordinarie), yet considering the matter I haue in hand, I thinke it not inconuenient. But to the matter. Repentance is an inward sorrowing, and continuall mourning of the hart and conscience for sinne, ioyned with faith, and both inward and outward amendment. Inward, I say, in chaunging the thoughts and affections of the hart: and outward in changing the wordes, and workes, from euil to good. This repentance no doubt was in Dauid, who when he was couertly re-

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proued by the Prophet Nathan, and his sinnes laide before his eies, did not stubbornely defende them, and so iustle against GOD: nor yet secretly excuse them, and daube them ouer, but cried out in the bitternesse of his heart: I haue sinned, and therupon made the 51. Psalme. A Psalme indéede full of dolour and heauinesse: wherin the Prophet bewaileth his fals, lamenteth his sinnes, and praieth euen for a new hart and a newe spirite, newe thoughtes, newe affections, newe purposes of amendment of life. So that in Dauid we may sée an inward sorrowing, a lasting griefe, (as the booke of Psalmes doth euery where declare, which layeth him out as it were in an Anatomie) yea, and great reformation: both in inward and outwarde sinnes. Here therefore beholde what is repentaunce. Likewise Saint Peter through infirmitie hauing denied his Lorde and Maister Christ, and béeing pinched of his owne conscience, and wakened with the alarme of a poore Cockes crowing, went out of the Court of Pilate with a heauie heart wéeping bitterly, and euer after stoutely professing Christ euen vnto the death. Sée then what is repentance. The Prophetes

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in the olde testament, exhorting the rebellious Iewes vnto repentance, vse commonly an Hebrewe Verbe, which signifieth, turne ye, or returne ye, and come backe againe, by the which Metaphor is ment, that like as a man that is straied farre out of his way, must turne quite backe againe the contrarie waye: So those that haue strayed from the wayes of godlinesse to the way of sinne, must come backe againe as fast as euer they went forwarde, and altogether chaunge the course of their life: so that repentance is an earnest turning vnto God with all our hart, soule, and minde. Saint Iohn Baptist, and the Apostles in the newe Testament exhorting vnto repentance, vse a Greeke worde which signifieth a changing of the minde afterward, or after wit, so that those which through their follie, and want of former wit, haue slipped into the deepe pit and dangerous gulfe of sinne, when they come to themselues, and haue recouered their wits, will be wise afterwarde, and take heede they neuer come there againe, according to the Prouerbe, The burnt childe will take heed of the fire. By this time I hope you see what is repentance. It is not euery sorow,

but

but ſorowe for ſinne, not for ſome ſinne, but for all ſinne, not for an howre, but for euer, not for a day, but continually, not for a weeke, but as long as we liue. Some think euery ſorowe is repentance, but ſo ſhould worldlings repent. Some thinke euerie little pant for ſinne is repentance, ſo ſhould Pharaoh repent. Some thinke all weeping and lamenting for ſinne is repentance: ſo ſhould Eſau, Iudas, & Caine repent. Some thinke euery little humbling of our ſelues is repentance, but ſo ſhould Achab repent. Some thinke that good wordes and good purpoſes is repentance: but ſo ſhould euery ſicke man repent. Some thinke that reformation of wordes and deedes is repentance: but ſo ſhould ciuil men repent. Some thinke that crie God mercie is repentance, and ſo ſhould euery fole repent. You ſee therefore how many are deceiued in repentance, but if you will ſee what it is in deede, loke backe to that which hath been ſaide afore. For hee that will repent in good earneſt, muſt not hang downe his heade like a Bulruſh for a day onely, and ſo haue done, nor crie from the teeth forward, Lord haue mercie on mee, and ſo awaye: but he muſt make a backe reckoning with diligent conſidera-

ſideration of his former life, as did the Prophet Dauid, Pſalme 119. verſe 59. I haue conſidered my wayes, & turned my feete vnto thy teſtimonies. So muſt euery one that meaneth to repent, ſlinke aſide into ſome corner or out place, that there he may haue rome enough to beate his owne conſcience, and to make his hart ſmart for his ſinnes, by aggrauation thereof, and weighing all the circumſtances, as in the 9. of Daniel. The Church of God confeſſeth her ſinne, not lightly, but with wonderfull great exaggeration, and heaping of one thing to another. So that it is not enough to ſay, I haue ſinned, but to ſay, I haue moſt traiterouſly ſinned, I haue moſt obſtinately, careleſſy, and rebelliouſly ſinned: I haue monſtrouſly offended in ſuch a place, in ſuch a houſe, in ſuch companie, in ſuch a day. In ſuch a corner in the darke I cõmitted adulterie cloſely, when I thought none had ſeene me: in ſuch a Chamber I defiled my neighbours wife: mine owne conſcience doth accuſe me of it. In ſuch and ſuch companie I haue beene drunke, I haue ſpoken and railed agaynſt Gods word, I haue mocked the Preachers, I haue ſpared no othes nor filthie

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ſpéech, and now O Lord, Lord, what an vgly monſter, and wretched villaine am I: Here I ſtand before thy preſence all naked, blind, wounded, poore, wretched and miſerable, hauing deſerued a thouſand damnations, if thou ſhouldeſt enter into iudgement, & trie the law with me. Therefore I beſéech thée ſhew pittie and compaſſion vpon me. Annoint my woundes with the oyle of mercie: Reſtore mée my ſight, cloath my nakednelle, enrich me that am poore, ſtrengthen me that am weake: helpe me vp that am fallen: oh bid me not farewell. The infant ouercommeth his mother with crying, the child his father with wéeping, and the ſeruant his maiſter by intreatie, and wilt not thou be intreated O Lord? Thus I ſay, if euery man would ſpeake in his conſcience to God, and thus narowly or more narowly examine himſelfe, vndoubtedly he were in the way of repentance.

But alas it is a world to ſée how the blind Buzzardes, and crooked Canker-wormes of this world goe awry from this rule, deceiuing themſelues with the bare title and naked name of repentance. Many in déed can talke of it: but few walke in it. Many

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speake of it: but few feele it. Many describe it: but few know it. It is hid and locked vp from the world, and reuealed onely to gods childrē. Many think they haue caught it, when they haue but the shadow of it. It is so hie that few can reach it. It is so deepe that few can come to the bottome of it. It is so narow that few can enter into it. So wide, that few can comprehend it. So slipperie that few can hold it. So secret, that fewe can finde it. Therefore my deere brethren, I beseech you, let vs pray vnto our God, that he would reueal vnto vs this misterie which is hid from the world, that we may truely see it, and know it, finde it, and feele it, to our endlesse comfort, through Christ Jesus, which grace he graunt vs. But now to the second point concernyng the qualities and fruites of Repentance. One speciall qualitie of Repentance, is alwayes to bring with it remission of sinnes: for where true Repentance goeth before, there remission of sinnes must necessarilie folow after, not that repentance deserueth Remission of sinne, but because where God worketh repentance, there he pardoneth sin because of his promise. As in Ezech. 18. 27. When the wicked turneth away from

his wickednes, that he hath cõmitted, & doth that which is lawful & right, he ſhall ſaue his ſoule aliue. And againe, Eſa. 55.7. Let the wicked forſake his waies, and the vnrighteous his owne imaginatiõs, & returne vnto the Lord, & he will haue mercy vpõn him. So here we ſee, to whom forgiuenes of ſinnes, and the mercy of God belongeth: namely, to the penitent ſinners, to thoſe that leaue ſinne, and imbrace godlineſſe: to thoſe that forſake their owne waies and imaginations, and turn vnto the Lord. And as for ſuch as walke on, in their owne waies, and folow the delights of ſin, without any ſorow or purpoſe to leaue thẽ, they haue nothing to do with the mercy of God, & though Jeſus Chriſt had ſuffred an hundred deaths (which could not be) yet ſhall no vnpenitent ſinner haue remiſſion of his ſinnes by his death, nor any other benefits of his paſſion, for they belong onely to his Church and choſen people here vpon the earth. He therfore that is not of the church, he that is not graffed into Chriſt by Faith, he that is not a mẽber of his miſticall body, can enioy nothing by Chriſts death. If any man abide not in me, he is caſt foorth as a branch, & withereth, & men gather them

and

and caſt them into the fire, & they burne Ioh. 15. 6. We read in the 29. of Deuteronom. howe God barreth all ſtubborne ſinners from his mercy, and doth moſt terribly ſhoote out againſt them. Ye that heareth the wordes of this curſe, and bleſſeth himſelfe in hart, ſaying: I ſhal haue peace although I walke according to the ſtubbornnes of mine owne heart, thus adding drunkennes to thirſt, the Lord will not bee merciful vnto him, but thē the wrath of the lord, & his iealouſie ſhal ſmoak againſt that man, & euery curſe that is writtē in the book ſhall light vppon him. So that God ſaith plainly, he hath no mercy for ſuch, as walk in the vain delights of ſin, & in the ſtubbornes of their own hart: adding drūkennes to thirſt: That is ioining one horrible ſin to another, yet for all this it is a wonder to ſee how the blind worms of the earth deceiue thēſelues. For they think whatſoeuer they ſay, whatſoeuer they do, be it good, be it euil whether they repent, or not repent, yet they ſhall be ſaued by Chriſtes death, as though they would make it a baude to their ſinnes and ſo work that villanie againſt Chriſt. I hope to be ſaued by Chriſtes death, as well as the beſt of them al, ſaith ſom. But where

is thy repentance thou miserable wretch: Doest thou think that Gods mercie is common to all? And Christs death a baude for our sins: no, no, when it cõmeth to the vpshot, thou shalt stop short. For it wil prooue farre otherwise: For thou shalt finde Gods mercie turned into iustice: & Christs death into wormewoode, bycause thou hatedst knowledge, and chosedst not the feare of the Lord. Thus you see my deere brethren, that repentance must needes go before forgiuenesse of sinnes, and where it leadeth not the way, there the gates of gods mercy are shut vp, and this is the first qualitie of repentance. It hath also an other condition, and that is to alter and change men from that they were before, not in the substance and proportion of the bodie, but in the qualities and conditions of the mind. For whosoeuer hath truly repented, you shall by and by see a most maruellous and wonderfull change in him, so that he will not doe as he hath done, nor speak as he hath spoken, nor companie as he hath companied, nor play the good fellow (as they term it) as he was wont to do: nor run to the same excesse of riot he was wont. And this is it that amazeth the worlde, and causeth them to bristle and

some at the mouth like wild boares, and to speake euill of them that turned vnto God: for the world loueth his owne, and can not abide that God should plucke one feather from his wings. But Repentance doth violently pull men out of the clawes of Sathan, & change them from the conditions of the world: for it maketh of proud, humble: of hurtfull, harmelesse: of cruell, meeke: of Wolues, Lambes: of Lions, Sheepe: of adulterers, chaste liuers: of drunkards, sober men: of swearers, reuerent speakers: of haters, louers: of despisers, imbracers: of scoffers, followers: of earthly, heauenly: of Diuels, Saints. All this worketh Repentance. Paule trauailed towards *Damascus*, a wolfe, a persecutor, a bloodsucker, an hater, a despiser, but ere he came there, he was quite changed, and clean of an other mind: so mighty was he that met him by the way. When Iesus Christ sent downe the holie Ghost vpon his Disciples, according to his promise, there were some scoffers at *Ierusalem*, which mocked and said, They are full of new wine. But the same men cried out by and by after, Men and brethren what shall we do to be saued?

Here was a most wonderfull and sodain

change. See then the force of Repentance, when God striketh it into the hart of man, and driueth the naile to the head as they say it effecteth that which all the wisdome and pollicie of man is not able to bring to passe, and when they haue prolled hither, and thither, and laid their heades togither and sought al the corners of their wits, yet can they not tel which way to turn their hand, or where to begin to change the hart of a man, and to conuert him to God. Therfore repentaunce is stronger then all the whole world, & worketh that which all men with their naturall wits, fine heades, and deepe deuises cannot compasse, for the conuersion of a sinner, is a worke supernaturall. Here then we haue a glasse to beholde our selues in, whether euer we haue repented, or no. For if we finde not this change and alteration in vs, we haue not repented, and so consequently remaine vnder damnation. Therfore let euery man looke vnto himself for marke how much he is changed and altered from his former euill waies, so much hath he repented. And he that is the same man he was, three, foure, eight, nay, thirtie yeeres ago: surely, surely, he hath not repented, and therefore abideth in damnation. I

maruaile then how those men which neuer felt any change or alteration wrought in them, nay whose consciences tell them, that they are not chãged ne know what it meaneth, can haue any hope of saluation: vnles peraduenture they beleeue not this doctrine or think it to be false. I will send ouer these men to such as haue bene in the like case they now are, & yet thought they might do wel enough for all that, although both blind in iudgement, and corrupt in conuersation. I haue knowen, and do know men, which before their conuersion and inward change, were counted as honest men as euer brake bread, and as substantial men as they could be, as true dealers, vpright liuers, and good house-keepers as any of their neighbours: yea, and they had the same opinion of themselues too. And yet notwithstanding when they haue felt Repentance working this change and alteration in them, through the power of the spirit at the preaching of the word, and when they haue had new harts giuen them to discern better, and new eies to see better, as men come out of a dampe, haue wondred and marualled at the palpable and grosse darknes they were in before and haue burst forth into these words, that

they would not be in the same case they were afore, no not for all the worlds goods, for if they should haue died in that case, they were sure they should haue bene damned. But I pray you what case were they in before, were they not good honest men? well accounted off, and honest liuers, & well taken where soeuer they came? Surely they were so taken in the world, but now they thinke far otherwise of themselues, their eyes being opened, and their iudgements enlightned, for now they see that they saw not before, now they vnderstand that God condemneth many whom the world iustifieth. We thinketh this example should make ciuil and worldly men see and suspect themselues, and know their own misery before God. For these men were as good as they, before their conuersion, and yet afterward confessed that they were plunged to the bottom of hell, & drowned in the depth of damnation. He that hath eares to heare, let him heare, & he that hath eies to see, let him see: for if men will still soth themselues for all this, that they shal be saued without feeling any change or worke of repentance, it will cost them ful deare in the end. For Christs words wil proue true, that whosoeuer repenteth

penteth not, shal be damned, that is, who so euer doth not féele in himselfe what is Repentance, and find in himselfe the qualities thereof shalbe condemned. For where Repentance is, there be the qualities of Repentance, and where the qualities be absent, there is no true repentance. So that where Christ saith: Except ye repent, ye shal all perish: it is all one as if he had sayd, except ye know the truth of repentance, except ye can proue vnto your consciences the forgiuenes of your sinnes, except you féele a change and alteration in the bottom of your hart, of all your former lewd wayes & misdemeanor you shal surely perish & be damned. But let vs yet a litle farther search out the qualities of Repentance: The Apostle in the seuenth Chapter of the second epistle to the *Corinthians*, setteth downe seuen notable qualities and effects of Repentance. The first of them he nameth care. For behold saith he, this thing that you haue bene godly sory, what care it hath wrought in you, that is an earnest study and as it were a taking thought to please God. For where true repentance hath once wrought, there foloweth great care afterward. Care I say, to line in the obedience of GOD. Care to

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keepe a good conscience. Care to reform our Households. Care to instruct Wiues, Childrē and seruants in the knowledge of God. Care to pray with them morning and euening: and generally, care to performe all duties belonging vnto God, so that repentance is not a careleſſe, but a careful thing. Let not men thinke therfore that although they welter in the careleſneſſe of the flesh, & sleep in securitie all the dayes of their life, yet their repentance is good enough, yea, and though they spend whole daies, nights, moneths, and yeeres in vanities, plaies and pastimes, in idleneſſe, fond delights: pleasure and voluptuouſneſſe, in negligence of all duties, forgetfulneſſe of God, and contempt of all good things: yet for al this they repent for their sinnes, and hope to be saued as well as any other. But alas how cā these things stand togither, to repent for sinne, and to delight in sinne: to hate sinne, & loue sinne, to flie from sinne, and to follow after sinne. But these mē I perceiue would fain make S. Paul a lier, for he saith a mā hath neuer repented, except he be carefull afterward to please God, they say they do repent & haue repented, although they liue neuer so wretchedly, and careleſly. But when all licen-

licencious and lewde liuers, filthy whoremongers, beastly bellygods, & careleſſe caitiffes, come to the kingdome of God, & are ſaued, then ſhall theſe men alſo come with them to be ſaued by careleſſe repentance.

The next qualitie and effecte of Repentance, is named, cleering of our ſelues, that is diſcharging of our ſelues, when ſin doth accuſe vs and lay things to our charge: for when ſinne and Sathan, doth terrifie the conſcience of the poore penitent Sinner, by and by he flieth vnto God, & aſketh forgiueneſſe through Jeſus Chriſt, and ſo cleereth himſelfe, and maketh his Apologie againſt ſin and Sathan, like as a man that is preſented into the Court, vppon ſuſpition of whoredom, or any other notorious crime, muſt clere himſelf by witnes of that which is laid to his charge. So the conſcience that is cited by Sathan before the iuſtice and iudgement ſeat of God, cleareth it ſelfe by Repentance, and aſketh forgiueneſſe thorow Jeſus Chriſt. So that here wee maye ſee a wonderfull fruite of a penitent conſcience, it cannot abide the accuſation of ſin. It cannot be quiet till it be reconciled vnto God: and ſo haue peace with it ſelfe: For this is to be noted in the godly man, that when

when he hath committed any sinne, and his conscience telleth him of it, by and by he feeleth lead within him, and is all heauie, and cannot sleepe quietly, till he haue gotten in some corner, where he may mourne and lament to the full, and confesse and lay open himselfe vnto God, & so cleere himselfe thorowe Iesus Christ, his conscience bearing him witnes that his sin is forgiuen. Where as contrariwise the vngodly man, when his conscience accuseth him of sinne, he dispatcheth away all such thoughts, and treadeth them vnder foote, and by and by calleth for a paire of cards or tables, and some merrie companion to driue away the time, and to put out al such thoughts out of his head, and so indeed he increaseth them more and more and causeth them to rankle inwardly.

The third qualitie is called indignation, that is, a mortall and deadly hatred against sin: as when a man doth shudder and shake and as it wer grind his teeth at the remembrance of his sins: for this is alwaies in the penitent person to loth and abhorre all sin from his hart, both his owne sinnes and the sinnes of other, and to hate it as the Diuel himselfe, which is the author of it, and to flie from it, as from the very cut throte

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and hangman of his soul, and to know it to be the only thing that blindeth, that hardeneth, that separateth from God, and procureth all plagues and diseases both of bodie and soule against vs. Therefore he spiteth at it in defiance, and disdaineth it, and stoppeth his nose at the stinke of it, wheresoeuer he smelleth it.

The fourth thing is feare, which is a certaine awe of God, when a man is afraid to displease him. For the penitent person feareth alway, and being priuy to his own infirmitie and weaknes (when God neuer so little withdraweth his grace, and leaueth him alone) worketh his saluation with feare and trembling. He will not presume vpon former grace to commit any sin, or flatter himselfe in the mercie of God, and in the things that he hath alreadie tasted of God, to yeelde to some little sinne, thinking hee may do that, and be the childe of God well ynough, bicause som of Gods children haue fallen into greater: but rather he trembleth at the least motion of sinne, and is afraid of the temptations which Satan trumpeth in his way, and is afraide when the temptations of sinne are vpon him, to satisfie the hunger of sinne, but rather he fighteth a-

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against sin, when sin fighteth against him, and presenteth the feare of God before his eies (as godly Joseph in the assault of Putiphars wife) to be as it were a towre of defence and welspring of life, to auoide the snares of death.

The fift thing is desire, that is a hungering and thirsting after righteousnes. For the penitent man is rauished with desire of good thinges: hee desireth to bee euerie daie better then other: he desireth to leaue euery day some sin: he desireth to pray: he desireth new knowledge, and new vnderstanding of heauenly thinges. Hee desireth to heare Sermons, & will straine himselfe to heare them. He desireth the company of the godly, he thinketh himself in heauen, when he is among them. He desireth the saluation of his very enimies, & praieth for them. All these and many other such like desires are in the penitent man.

The sixt qualitie is zeale, which cõsisteth in the earnest imbracing of vertue, and hatred of vice, so that the penitent person, is zealous in euery good thing. Zealous of Gods glory in all places, in all companies, and amongst all persons. He cannot abide that Gods honour should bee impeached, or his

his name blasphemed, or his glory trampled vnder foot by wicked men, but he will open his mouth to reproue the wicked, and stand stoutly in the defence of Gods glory. He is not like the Atheists, and Dissemblers, which are alwaies as is the company, that is, godly amongst the godly: a protestant amongst protestants: wicked amongst the wicked: a Papist amongst Papists: a Worldling amongst Worldlings: and a Swearer amongst Swearers: a weather-cocke that turneth with euery wind. The penitent mã I say, is not of this stamp, but he is constant & zealous in all good things. He is zealous both against the pleasures & profits of sinne, though he might winne a whole world, or pleasure himselfe neuer so much, by committing a sinne against God, yet will he refuse it, for he hath learned frõ Christs mouth, that it shal not profit a man to winne the whole world, and to lose his owne soule.

The last thing is Reuenge, that is, the penitent person is so offended with the sin he hath cõmitted, that he will be reuenged of himselfe for it. As for example, if he haue offended in Gluttonie, he wil reuenge himselfe by fasting two or three dayes after: If

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he haue offended in whoredome, he will be reuẽged of his lusts, by haltring and brideling them euer after: If he haue offended in couetous catching and polling of other mens goods, he will be reuenged on himself by restitution, as was godly and penitent Zacheus, and this in deed is a speciall fruit of Repentance, to reforme our selues in those things, wherein we haue most offended. Now, then you see (my dere brethren) what lieth in the bellie of Repentance, and which be hir inwardes, so that we must needs now come to the vnlacing and vnbowelling of Christs word. Except ye repent (saith he) ye shall all perish: that is, except ye haue this forenamed care, you shall all be damned: Except you haue this clearing of your selues, you shal be damned, except you haue this indignation: you shal all be damned: Except you haue this feare you shalbe damned: Except you haue this desire, you shall all be damned: Except you haue this zeale, you shal all be damned: Except you haue this reuenge, you shall all be damned. For our Sauiour Christ doth not speake of the bare name of Repentance: but of Repentance with all his furniture, and appurtenances: so that whosoeuer hath

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not Repentance with all his qualities and effects, or at the leſt ſome meaſure of them, he hath no repentance in deede, and therefore ſhall be damned, For except ye repent, ye ſhall all periſh. But me thinketh that I heare ſome men ſay: Here is nothing but damnatiõ, damnation: You preach nothing but the Lawe: Let vs heare of the Goſpel. My brethren I proteſt vnto you, that I ſpeake of loue, whatſoeuer I ſpeake. I deſire the ſaluation of you all: If I could win but two in all this congregation, I would count my ſelfe happy, and thinke that God had greatly bleſſed my labours. And vndoubtedly, if I knew any nearer way to bring you vnto GOD, then by preaching the Lawe, to make you know your ſelues: Surely, ſurely, I would vſe it. Or if I could be perſwaded that the preaching of the Goſpell, and mercy would doe you more good: you ſhould heare of nothing but Goſpell, Goſpell, Mercy, mercy: But alas, I ſee that euery careleſſe and ignorant man preſumeth vpon Gods mercy, I ſee that euery filthy liuer, and notorious blaſphemer, abuſeth Gods mercy, in applying it to himſelfe without repentance, ſo that

they would make Gods mercy a cloake for their sinnes: I see that euery man would faine be flattered in sinne, and heare of it no more, but haue the Gospell preached, which in deede belongeth not vnto them, continuing in their stubbornnes, but onely to the penitent sinner, which forsaketh himself and groneth, and panteth vnder the burden of his sinne. Therefore when I see you humbled with the conscience of your sinnes, and grone and pant vnder the burden of them: when I see your faces blubbered with weeping, and your harts mollified, and sorrowing with care, then will I comfort you, and cease to preach the lawe. But I pray you will you steale, murther, and commit adulterie, and yet heare of mercie? Will ye mock, swear, blaspheme, and raile, and yet heare of mercie? Will you serue sinne, hate vertue, and follow your owne lusts, and yet heare of mercy? Would you haue Plaisters before you haue wounds? Would you haue Phisike before you bee sicke? Would you be let bloud before you haue neede? Would you not account him a foolish Phisition that will minister phisike to a whole man? Would you not think him

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an vnskilfull Chirurgion, that will applie a gentle Salue to an olde festered soze, and not rather cozzie it: Then knowe you my bzethzen, that bicause you are full of grosse humozs, you must haue strong purgations because you are ful of old festered wounds, you must haue cozrasiue Salues, foz that is the best foz you, and the spedyest way to recouer your health: and fozasmuch as you be rough Hozses, you must haue a rough Rider: and hard knobbie Timber must haue hard Wedges, and hard strokes with a beetle. We pzeach the Lawe to dziue you to Christ: we pzeach iudgement to make you seek mercy: we pzeach damnation to bzing you to saluation. But to pzeach mercy and forgiuenesse befoze men see their sinnes, oz knowe their miseries by the pzeaching of the Law, is to pzeach the Gospell vnpzofitably. Foz he that is ignozant of the Law, knoweth not what miserie is in himselfe: noz what mercy is in God.

What father is there, who if his childe should play the stubbozne boy, and disobey him in euery thing he commanded, would stroke his head, and say he were a good boy and not rather seuerely cozrect him, and

whippe him with a rodde: What maister will commende his seruant for doing what he list, and not what he commandeth him: euen so wee may not disobey, and do euill, and looke to be flattered too, and not rather chidden. Let vs knowe then, that although God vse searing, launcing, rozing, & searching of the bones, and other violent remedies, yet in the meane while hee procureth our health by them. And let vs further vnderstand, that for as much as there is none other meanes to draw vs to saluation, but by cleansing of all our vices, and the same cleansing cannot be done but by violence, when we be warned by the doctrine of the Law so as our owne conscience accuse vs, although wee like well to bee nowe and then flattered and soothed, yet let vs seeke to bee spoken vnto earnestly, to haue our faults told vs, and to be made ashamed of them, & to haue our vnhonesty discouered and not desire to be pleased. For it were the next way to make vs rot in our own filthinesse, if we should hold it so in secret: and it would cost vs dear ye setting on, if we shuld be so flattered by men, & in the meane season the heauenly iudge shall thunder down

vpon

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Therfore when any man commeth to a Sermon, let him firſt and formoſt make his reckoning to be rebuked, as meete is, and let him vnderſtand, that it is for his profit; that he is not ſoothed. And if he haue itching eares, let him lay them away from him, aſſuring himſelf that els he is forecloſed, ſo as he ſhal neuer receiue the doctrine to his profite and inſtruction. And let him be content to haue his ſores rubbed and be wraied, that he may be brought to that, which is for his welfare. If a man pleaſe a ſicke body, what ſhall become of him, ſhall he giue him drink euery minute of an howre? ſhall he giue him wine, whereas he ſhould giue him water? Shall he giue him Sallets? It were the next way to poiſon him. To be ſhort, it is certaine that a man doth alwaies ſeeke his owne death, when he would haue men to ſoth him. But now which is better, eyther that he which hath the ordering of a ſicke man, ſhould yeeld to all his deſires, or that he ſhould bridle him, notwithſtanding that he chafe and gnaſh his teeth, becauſe he may not haue his owne will in his deſires? You ſee therefore how dangerous a thing

it is to flatter & raise vp men with the preaching of mercy, before they haue beene cast downe with the sense of gods iudgements. Cease therefore to open your mouthes to make hue and crie ouer the Country, saying: They preach nothing but the Law, the Law, Damnation, Damnation, vnlesse ye will take in Christ to, and make him one of the number, and accuse him of want of wisdome: Because he preacheth and crieth out that whosoeuer repenteth not shall be condemned. For my part, I preach the Gospell to whom the Gospell belongeth, and the Law to whom the Law belongeth. I preach mercy to whom mercy belongeth, & iudgement to whom iudgement appertaineth. And therefore hold your peace and be content to be ruled by the wisedom of God. But now let vs proceed to the third general point, which is the time when we should repent.

The holie Ghost in the Scriptures pointeth vs to the present time, & exhorteth vs to make that the time of our repentaunce. Ioel. 2.21. Therefore, also now we the Lord saith, turne you vnto me with al your hart, with fasting with weeping and with mourning.

ning. Likewise in the 3. chapter to the Hebrewes: Exhort one another while it is called to day, least any of you be hardened through the deceitfulnesse of sinne. And in the same chapter. To day if ye will heare his voice, harden not your hartes as in the prouocation: So that now, euen now, euen now, is the time of our repentance. Now whilst he calleth, now whilst he speaketh, now whilest he knocketh, let vs now therefore heare: let vs now therefore obey: let vs now therfore redeeme this day: this present Wednesday, which haue followed so many daies, which haue so long hardned our hartes, which haue let so many good things run out, and spill besides: let vs take vp this day, and make it the day of our repentance. Although we could neuer be moued with any Sermon hitherto, yet let vs now be moued once at last: Let vs now say, this shall be my day of repentance, I will deferre it no longer, but now will I turne vnto my God, and forsake all my former wicked waies, and mine owne imaginations: I will now change the course of my life, and begin all new againe. I will be acquainted with Gods word, and take

counsel there how to do, and how to behaue my selfe in euery action. I wil not only reforme my selfe, but also my whole houshold, wife, children, and seruants, according vnto the same. Thus my deere brethren, I beseech you, purpose in your harts without any further delay, and be not like to Epicures and slacke-graces, which say youth will be youthfull, and youth will haue a course, and what should we make it so holy when we are yong: tush there needes but a sigh an houre before death, let vs be mery now, we shal neuer be yonger, we will repent when we are olde. As though poore soules, they had repentance in their sleeues and at their commandement, and that they could repent whē they list. No, no, these fellowes shall pay for their presumption. For God will giue them ouer to hardnesse of hart, and impenitencie, because they take so much vpon them, and made so long delaies, that in the meane season they might enioy the profits & plesures of sinne. Therfore good brethren let vs not put it off from day to day, but let vs now seeke the Lord whilest he may be found, and call vpon him whilest he is neere: let vs take time while

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time is, for time and tide tarieth for no mã. Let vs know this to be the time of our visitation. Our Sauiour Christ wept ouer Hierusalem, because they knew not ỹ time of their visitation. He reproueth the Iewes because they could discerne the face of the skie, but could not discerne the signes of the times. And surely in the ende it will turn to our destruction, if we wil not know this to be the day of mercy, ỹ time of grace, wherein God stretcheth forth his hand vnto vs, and wisedom crieth out in the streets. Therfore now whilest we haue the light let vs walke as Children of the light: the night commeth when no man can worke. It shall be too late to call for mercy after this life, when the gates of mercy are shut vp, and repentance will be too late. Oh deare Christians, let vs remember the fiue foolish Virgins, which because they foreslowed the time, had heauẽ gates barred vp against them. Let vs also remember the fearful and dolefull example of the rich glutton, which being in hell torments, yelled and yelped for the least ease & helpe that might be, and could not haue it. An hũdred thousãd times therefore, better it is for vs to leaue our sin

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now to mourne for them, now and now to repent, then hereafter, alas, when it will be too late. Better now a great deale to take some paines, to straine our selues to leaue our sinnes, & to make our hart smart for them, then to be cõdemned for euer, and to crie in the bottome of Hell: Wee haue wearied our selues in the way of wickednes and destruction, and we haue gone thorow dangerous wayes: but we haue not knowen the way of the Lord. What hath pride profited vs? Or what profit hath the pomp of riches brought vs? All those things are passed away like a shadowe, and as a post that passeth by. We haue set our selues against the children of God, we haue had them in derisiõ, and in a parable of reproch, we fooles thought their life madnesse, and their end without dishonour, but loe they are counted amongst the children of God, & their portion is among the Saints. Therfore let vs know the tyme of our calling, and let vs not be worse then the foules of the aire: The Turtle, the Crane, and the Swallow, obserue the times of their coming. The Husbandman taketh his times. The mariner watcheth his tides. There-

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fore, let vs also take the time and turne vnto the Lord, whilest it is said to day, which grace God grant vs.

Nowe let vs returne vnto the fourth point concerning the causes, which may moue vs vnto repentance. Herein I haue obserued nine especiall thinges. First, the great mercy of GOD, leadeth vs vnto repentance, as Rom. 2. The bountifulnesse of God, leadeth vs vnto repentance, saieth the Apostle. God doth continually followe vs, with his mercies and benefits, both concerning our soules and bodies, we haue no good thing, which we haue not receiued at his hands, we hold all that we haue of him and to him are we beholding for all, great is his mercie towardes our bodies, but much greater towardes our soules, and euery mercy and benefite, either towarde soule, or bodie, calleth vs to repentance. He giueth vs meate, drinke, and clothing, these call vs to repentance: he keepeth vs at his owne costs and charges here below, this calleth vs to repentance: the Sunne the Mone, and the Starres, call vs to Repentance. The Birdes of the aire, the Fishes of the Sea, and the fruits of the earth

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crie out vpon vs both loud and shrill: Repent, repent. All Creatures moue vs to repentance. Our Creation calleth, our redemption crieth, our Sanctification knocketh, and our Election moueth to repentance. What could God doe more for his Vineyard that he hath not done. Therfore let vs repent.

Secondly, the Iudgements of GOD moue vs vnto repentance, for all the thunderbolts, Plagues, and Punishments, which God hath throwne downe vpon obstinate sinners, from the beginning of the world, are so many warning peces vnto vs to awake vs out the dead sleep of sinne, and to pricke vs to Repentance. As in the first, Cor. 10. Whē the Apostle had rited diuers great iudgements of GOD, against the old Israelites for diuers sinnes, he concludeth: Now al these things came vnto them for examples, & were written to admonish vs, vpon whom the ends of the world are come. So that all the Iudgementes we read of in the Scriptures, are so many admonitions, and as it were Cart Ropes to drawe vs to Repentance. All the Iudgements we read of, heard of, doe se, and

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hear of euery day, knock with main strokes beate downe right vppon our consciences to Repentance. The vgly mõsters, strange birthes, fiery constellations, vnknowen Cometes, sodain death, marueilous droughes, vnwonted snowes, horrible inundations, forraine wonders, straunge apparitions, threatning of heauen aboue, with streming and shoting fire, trembling of the earth vnder our fæt, and our houses ouer our heads as of late day: What are all these, but as it were great Cranes with beames, and Cable Ropes, to drawe vs vp to the Lord by repentance.

Thirdly, the word of God haleth vs to Repentance. For, as God in olde time sent his prophets, both early and late, to call the rebellious Iewes to repentance: so he sendeth abroad his preachers, and messengers in these dayes, to sound vp ỹ trumpet of his word, and to ring the swet bel of Aaron amongst them, to awake them to repentãce, but alas, how lightly are they regarded? Who heareth their voice? But surely this is the last remedie that God hath apointed, and if this wil not moue vs to repentance, if this will not cure vs, then are we altogi-

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ther vncurable.

Fourthly, the infinite number of sinnes wee haue committed, ought to bee so many spurres in our sides, to pricke vs to repentance. It is sufficient, saith Saint Peter, that we haue spent the time past of our life after the lustes of the Gentiles, walking in Wantonnes, Lusts, Drunkennesse, Gluttony, Drinkings: and al abhominable Idolatries. Therefore, it is time nowe to Repent, Oh that men woulde loke backe to themselues, as they were fortie, thirtie, twentie or ten yeeres agoe. Oh that they would call to minde, their open and secrete sins, and me thinketh it should make their hart bleed within their belly, to think vpon them. Oh that they woulde consider howe much time they haue mispent, and howe many good things they haue neglected, and altogither omitted.

Fiftly the shortnesse of our life, calleth earnestly vpon vs to Repent. The time of our life is sixtie yeeres and ten, and if they be of strength eighty yeeres, yet the strēgth is but labour and sorrowe, so is it cutte off quickly, and we flie awaie saith the Prophet Dauid, we haue spent our yeres as a

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thought. Therefore he addeth: Teach vs to number our dayes, that we may apply our harts vnto wisdome. Our life for the shortnesse, and inconstancie of it in the Scriptures, is compared to grasse, to a vapour, to smoke, to a Weauers shuttle which glideth away swiftly. Euen so the daies of mã passe away, no man knoweth how. Man is of a short continuance, saith Iob, and full of trouble. Experience teacheth, that to day a man, to morrow none. Hence away we must all, here is no abiding place for vs, how soone we know not. Therefore let vs repent.

Sixtly, the small number of those which shall be saued, ought to thrust forward to repentance. Striue to enter in at the narow gate: For many I say vnto you will seeke to enter in, and shall not be able saith Christ, Luk. 13. 24. And in another place he saith, the gate is straight, and the way narow that leadeth vnto life, & few there be that find it. If men would consider of this, it would make them looke better about them, and try with themselues whether they be of that small number or no.

Seuenthly, death threatneth vs, who is

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very terrible to the flesh, & the remembrãce of it very bitter to a man that is soused and soked in the pleasures of this world. It flattereth no man, it regardeth not persons, it weigheth not friendship, it careth not for rewards, it is very grim, vgly, and cruell, and killeth downe right where it hitteth. Therfore let vs repent.

Eightly, the day of iudgement and second appéering of the Sonne of Man, will come as a Théefe in the night, in the which the heauens shall passe away with a noise, and the Elements shall melt with heate, and the Earth with woorkes that are therein, shall be burnt vp: séeing therfore that all these things must be dissolued, what maner of persons ought ye to be in holie conuersation and godlinesse, saith S. Peter 2.3. The Lord Jesus shal shew himself from heauen, with his mightie Angels in flaming fire, rendring vengeance vnto them that know not God, and obey not vnto the Gospell of our Lord Jesus Christ saith the Apostle, 2. Thes. 1. I sawe saith S. Iohn, Apoc. 20. a great white Throne, and one that sate on it, from whose face fled away, both the earth and the heauen, and

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their place was no more foūd. And I ſawe the dead, both great and ſmall ſtand before God: and the bookes were opened, and another booke was opened, which is the booke of life, & the dead were iudged of thoſe thinges, which were written in the bookes according to their workes. And the Sea gaue vp her deade, which were in her, and Death and Hel deliuered vp the dead which were in them: & they were iudged euery man, according to his woorkes. In theſe places we ſée, both the ſodaineneſſe, the fearefulneſſe, and glory of Chriſts comming. For hée ſhall not come poorely, and contemptuouſlie, as in the firſt viſitation, but he ſhall come very Princely, royally, and triumphantly to the great terrour of all his enimies, when a conſuming fire ſhall goe before him, and ten thouſand thouſandes of Angels waite vpon him: at what time the kinges of the earth, and the great men, and the rich men, and the chiefe captaines, and the mightie men, and euery bondman, and euery frée man, ſhall hide themſelues in dennes, and amongeſt the Rockes of the mountaines, and ſay to the rockes and mountains, fall on vs, and hide

vs from the presence of him, that sitteth on the throne, & from the wrath of the Lambe, for the great day of his wrath is come, and who can stand? Apoc. 6. Therefore let vs repent.

The last thing is hell torments, than the which nothing is more intollerable. Therfore saith Christ. Marke 9. If thine hande cause thee to offend, cut it off. It is better for thee to enter into life maymed, than hauing two hands, to goe into hell, into the fire that neuer shall bee quenched. Where the worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out. The Scripture speaketh terrible to our sences, concerning the estate of the damned persons, calling it hell fire, damnation, the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone for euer. In the thirty chapter of the prophesie of Esay, it is called Topheth, and it is euen prepared of old, it is euen prepared for the king: he hath made it deepe and large, the burning thereof is fire and much wood, the breath of the Lord like a riuer of brimstone doeth kindle it: These speeches are terrible to our sences, and may maruellously amaze vs. But if I had the tonge of an hundred men, nay of

an hundred angels, yet were I not able to vtter them as some shal one day feele them, much lesse were you able to conceiue them. If all the tortures and cruel torments that can be deuised by the wit of man, were executed vpõ some one, yet were it nothing to this. We poore wretches thinke there is no paine to a collicke, or a cruell ague. But if all collickes, agues, and all other straunge diseases could possibly light vpon one man, it were but a flea bityng to that which is to come. The paine is endlesse, easelesse, and remedilesse. The dayes of their hellish torments shall neuer weare out, nor their yeres come to an end, the longer they continue, the lesse hope haue they. When as many yeres are expired, as there be men in the world, and starres in the heauens: when as many thousand yeres are ended, as there be Stones and Sand by the Sea shore: yet still there be x. hundred thousand times so many mo to come. Those that wil not now be moued in hearing, shal then be crushed to pieces in feeling. All drunkards, swearers, whoremongers, vsurers, extortioners, liers, mockers, contemners, secure persons, iolly fellowes, roisting ruf-

tians, lustie blouds, the braue lads of this world, and all other vnbeleeuers, shall one day be apprehended, and arraigned before the Barre of Gods tribunall seate, where the maiestie of God shal stand aboue them, with a naked sword of vengeance, and a scepter of iustice. The Deuill that old Sathanas shall stand on the one side to accuse them, and their owne conscience of the other side to condemne them, and the gaping gulfe of Hell vnderneath them readie to swallow them vp for euermore. Then shall the dreadfull sentence of eternall woe and damnation proceed against them. Goe ye cursed into hell fire, &c. There they shall drinke as a iust recompence of their iniquitie, the bitter cup of Gods eternall wrath and indignation, in the kingdome of darknes, and in the fearefull presence of Sathan, and all the cursed enemies of Gods grace, where the dolefull drumme of Gods anger shal euer sound through their eares, where shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth, where shall be confusion, woe, and endlesse lamentation. Their gripes shal be great, their grones so deepe, and their garboiles so vntollerable, that they shall grin like a dog

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in their infernall conuulsions, & with howling and yelling, crie out: Wo, and alas that euer I was borne: Oh that I had neuer bene borne, or that my mother had born me a toad. For then my condition should haue bene better then it is. Cursed was the time I was begot in, the houre I was conceiued in, and the day that I sucked my mothers paps. Cursed I was alwaies, cursed I am, & cursed I shall be for euermore. Woe, wo, how great is my torment, whose hart doth not melt, whose eares doe not glow, whose haires doth not stand vpō his head to heare these things. Therefore deare brethren let vs repent. If the mercy of God cannot allure vs, let his iudgements scarre vs. If his iudgements cannot scarre vs, let his word moue vs. If his word cannot moue vs, let our sinnes amaze vs. If our sinnes can not amaze vs, let the shortnes of our life dampe vs. If the shortnes of our life cannot dampe vs, let the smal number of those that shalbe saued, afray vs. If that cannot afray vs, let death terrifie vs. If death cannot terrifie vs, let the day of iudgement shake vs: If that cannot shake vs, yet let hell tormentes shudder vs, & rent vs in pieces. For verilie

my brethren, if none of all these can preuaile, if we will not for all this repent, but be obstinate, then we shal all perish and be damned according to Christs words. Now let vs proceede to speake of those things which let and hinder vs from repentance, which in deed although they be in number infinite, yet at this time I will lay forth seuen especiall lets, and hinderances vnto repentance.

The first is vnbeliefe, that is, when men will not beleeue those things that are spoken and prowed vnto them out of the word of God. This is it that vomiteth vp all good things, and poisoneth the very intralls of a man, and keepeth all good graces from vs. As appeareth Math. 13. 58. Hee did not many great workes there, for their vnbeliefs sake. And in the 4. to the Hebrews it is sayd: Vnto vs was the Gospell preached, as also vnto them, but the woord that they heard, profited not them, because it was not mixed with Faith, in those that heard it. So that here we may see, although we heare neuer so much, yet if we bring not faith with vs, we shall neuer profit vnto repentance. For vnbelief taketh

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vp our harts for Satan, and refuseth all the wholesome doctrine of saluation, and doth so harden them in the waies of sinne, that in the end they become past feeling, and can not be touched one whit, either with the iudgements or mercies of God: but count the one as blasts of wind, and make the other a couert for their filthines. You shall note some men, who when they haue heard their sins straightly ripped vp by the word of God, and their iust damnation proued by the same, without speedy & earnest repentance, will breake out into these words of vnbeleefe. If it be as he saith, God helpe vs I hope it is not so, I trust I shall do well enough for all this, as long as I haue a good faith in God, and doe no bodye no harme. Shal I leaue my pleasures and my profits for their sayings? What? doe they thinke none shall be saued, but such as reade the Scriptures, and heare sermons: God forbid but those which do not go to heare sermons, should be saued as wel as they. Why may not one serue God as well at home in his house, hauing good bookes, and good praiers, as by comming to the Church to heare sermons and seruice: Alasse, these

men ſtand too much in their owne light, and bewraye what folly and ignoraunce is in them. For do they think to be ſaued by any other meanes then God hath appointed: or when God hath auouched any thing in his word, wil they except againſt it, & ſo make God a lier: when God hath once ſet downe a thing, & prooued it to their faces, will they yet replie? When God hath tolde vs that the preaching of the word is the ordinarie meanes of our ſaluation, ſhall we hope to be ſaued, although we contemne it, & neuer or very ſeldome heare it? Is not this plaine infidelitie and vnbeléefe, that when God ſaith one thing we wil ſaie another: when God ſaith yea, we will ſay, no I hope not ſo. Yes ſurely that is it that ſtoppeth the way vnto Gods graces, and barreth vs out from repentance.

The ſeconde let is this preſumption of gods mercy, for if men be ſharply reproued for their ſinnes, and exhorted vnto repentance, by and by they take couert, ſaying: God is mercifull, God is mercifull, as though God were made all of mercy, and that there were no iuſtice in him at al: and thus the wicked make Gods mercy an occaſion

casion to sinne, which thing the Prophete Nahum in the first of his prophesie doth sharpely reproue, the Lord (saith he) is slow to anger, but he is great in power, and wil not surely cleere the wicked. But because I haue spoken afore of this presuming and misapplying of Gods mercy, I will heere passe it ouer, willing you to note it as one speciall let vnto repentance.

The third hinderance is the example of the multitude, for that doth harden and imbolden men vnto sin. As when many birds flicker and flocke togither, they fall vppon the Net without any feare: but one or two alone will be afraide. Euen so the exampls of many, and many sinne companions doe imbolden men to runne through the snares of Sathan without any mistrust. Therefore it is saide in Exodus 23. Thou shalt not followe a multitude to doe euill. This is the thing that hindreth a great number from god: for they neuer looke vp vnto God or to his word, but stare vpon the common doinges of most men, and examples of the world, thinking if they do as the most men doe, as their forefathers haue done before them, they are cocke sure and of an euen

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ground. And hereupon ariseth their diuelish prouerbe: Do as most men do, and the fewest will speake of you: but they haue forgotten S. Paules rule, Rom. 12. Fashion not your selus like vnto this world. These fellowes that stand vpon multitude, will reason thus: We see none of the greate ones of the world, none of the noble, none of the rich, none of the wise and prudent, receiue this doctrine, but only a few shackrags and beggerly rascals, and therefore it is a token that it is nothing worth, and that it is doubtfull, and not for vs to meddle withall. Lo what thoughts may creepe in our heades, and how slily Sathan may trumpe in our way, and blindfold vs, and leade vs away in the darke, by doting vs with the example of the multitude. Therefore, let vs take hede of those pitfalles, which Sathan laieth in our way, and not be carried away with these thoughts and reasons. The wicked beare themselues in hand that they shall winne the game, and that the goale goeth on their side, and there is nothing but crowing longe before it be day, and great triumphing amongest them before any stroke be striken, and that be-

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cause we be but a handfull of people, & they a great multitude, and that in a maner the whole world agræth with them to practise our death. Thus the deuill doth cast a mist before their eies, and closely lead them away from Repentance. Therefore deare brethren, let vs stand fast in ỹ word of the Lord, and not be caried away, or bowed quite downe with this raging streame of the multitude: but let vs know it to be one speciall engine of Sathan, whereby he driueth vs from repentance.

The fourth let vnto repentance, is long custome of sinne. For that taketh away all sense and feeling of sinne, and maketh it as it were another nature vnto vs: so that we may as wel alter nature, as shake it of whē it is once thus soldred vnto vs through long custome. Therefore it is sayd: Iere. 13. 23. Can the black Moore change his skinned or the Leopard her spots? then may ye also do good that are accustomed to do euil. Here the prophet affirmeth, that it is as hard to cure an olde disease that is bred in the bones, and to remedie a sinne that hath bene hatched and brought vp with vs, as wash a blacke Moze white, or to change

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the spots of a Leopard, which cannot be without destroying of nature. And surelie try it who wil, he shal find it as hard a matter to leaue an old custome, whether it be of swearing, of gaming, of lying, or whoring, of euil company, or of any other sinne, as to wash an Ethiopian. Therfore it is written. Prou. 17. Though thou shouldest braie a foole in a morter, among wheate brayed with a pestell: yet wil not his foolishnesse depart from him. So that as long as we are in custome with sinne, the doze of Repentance is barred vp against vs.

The fift hinderance, is long escaping of punishment, for the wicked thereby are starkened in sinne, & driuen off from repentance, euen as an old theefe that hath stolne a long tyme, and escapeth both prison and gallowes, is animated more boldly to proceed in his wickednesse, thinking he shall so alwaies escape. So many filthy and lose liuers goe forward in their abhominations without Repentance, thinking that because God doth not incontinently punish them, and shew some manifest iudgement and signe of his wrath vpon them, therfore they shalbe acquited for altogither. Where

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as contrarywise, if God should by and by strike them downe as soone as they had sinned, by thundring vpon one, and lightning vpon another, and raining fire and brimstone vpon the third, it would make them afraid. Hereupon it is sayd in Pet. 2. 3. 4. This first vnderstand, that there shall come in the last dayes mockers, which wil walke after their lusts, and say, where is the promise of his comming? For since the fathers died, all things continue alike from the beginning of the creation. But let these men well know that when God hath delayed a long time, and prolonged the terme of the wicked, at length he will shew that although he waited for their repentance, yet he forgate not their misdeeds, but registred them before him, and packed them vp vpon a great heape, to encrease the terrour of his wrath.

The first hinderance, is the beholding of other mens ends. For when some men that haue liued a wicked, and an vngratious life, and haue bene notorious sinners euen to the world-ward, so that euery man could point at them: yet if vpon their deathbed they can saie a fewe good wordes

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and cry God mercy, and say their prayers, and forgiue all the world, and so die quietly, it is maruailous to heare, how foolish people of the world, will exalt them, and iustifie them, saieng: He made a very good end as any man could make, he died as quiet as a Lambe, and set all things in good order before he died. Hereupon another wicked & monstrous verlet is encouraged to sinne. For thinketh he, such a man liued as lewsely as I, or any man els, and yet he made a very good end, and why may not I do so to, but alas these mens eyes are bleared, For to die quietly, is not to die godly, to cry God mercy for fashion, is not to haue God mercifull, to say a few prayers frō teeth outward, is not to die in the faith of Christ, for many do all this, and yet die miserably.

The last let, is hope of long life, for while men feed, and besot themselues in this hope they war drunken in sinne, and deferre the day of repentāce. As the rich man in the xij. of Luke, dreaming of his long life, cast of all thought of God, and of the other life, and of Christes comming, & of repentance, and all good things, and said within himself: Soule

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thou hast much goodes layd vp for many yéeres, liue at ease, eate, drink, and take thy pastime. Thus the bleare eyed men of the world choke vp Repentance, and quite smother it, by doting themselues with hope of long life. Therefore my deare brethren, I beseech you by the mercies of God in the bowels of Jesus Christ, that none of all these common lettes may staie you from spéedie and vnfaigned Repentance: But that you may ouerslide them all, least vnhappilie you beyng found without Repentance, and taken tardie in your sinnes, should all perish and be damned, according to Christes sentence. Wherefore in conclusion, let vs with godly Ezechias be afrayd of Gods threatenings, sorrow afore hand, stand in awe of GOD, examine our conscience, mourne for our sinnes, and lament inwardly, that when the wicked which haue swimmed in pleasures here below, shall enter into their eternall pains, we may then, I say there, haue euerlasting peace & rest, that when Jesus Christ shall appéere from heauen with all his holy Angels, we may haue crownes of glory, and raigne with our GOD, and our

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Sauiour his Sonne, and all his Saintes and Angelles, in the middest of all ioy, in the Heauens for euermore. To the which ioy he bring vs all, which hath so dearely bought vs, Iesus Christ the righteous: to whom with the Father, and the holy Ghost be all honour, glory, praise, power, empire, and Dominion, nowe and for euermore. Amen.

FINIS.